

6

Sarakāni Sutta 1

Paṭhama Sarakāni Sutta The First Discourse on Sarakāni | S 55.24
 Be **Paṭhama Saraṇāni Sakka Sutta** The First Discourse on Saraṇāni the Sakya
 Theme: Even a drinker can reach the path
 Translated by Piya Tan ©2003

1 Sarakāni is assured of liberation

1.1 There are 2 consecutive **Sarakāni Suttas** in the Saṃyutta (in the 55th book, the Sotāpatti Saṃyutta).¹ In both of them, the Buddha tells Mahānāma that a lay disciple who has for a long time taken refuge in the 3 jewels, as in the case of Sarakāni, would not go to the lower realms (the hells, the preta realm, the animal kingdom) [§6].

The briefer **Sarakāni Sutta 1** succinctly presents the case of **Sarakāni the Sakya**, an erstwhile drinker (there is no mention he is a “drunkard”) who dies a streamwinner. **Sarakāni Sutta 2** has the same import, but begins by stating that Sarakāni “was one who had *failed* to complete the training”²—that is, who has broken the 5th precept [§3.2]—and includes the parable of the 2 fields (one bad, one good) and of proper Dharma practice as “good seed.” He dies a streamwinner.

1.2 The 2 suttas each have a somewhat differently worded **conclusions**:

Sarakāni S 1: *Sarakāni Mahānāma sakko maraṇa, kāle sikkhaṃ samādiyī ti.*
 “Mahānāma, Sarakāni the Sakya has kept to the training (in moral virtue, concentration, and wisdom) at the time of his death.” SD 3.6. [§13.2]

Sarakāni S 2: *Sarakāni Mahānāma sakko maraṇa, kāle sikkhāya paripūra, kārī ahoṣī ti,*
 “Mahānāma, Sarakāni the Sakya fulfilled the training at the time of his death.” SD 77.8. [S 55.25,14]

From the contexts of the two accounts, it is clear that these two sentences mean the same thing, that is, Sarakāni becomes a streamwinner at the time of his death. This means that his last thought was wholesome.

1.3 DESCENDING INTO THE PATH

1.3.1 Analayo makes this helpful observation:

Since S 5:379 [§§10-11] has the same set of terms used in the definition of the “*Dhamma-follower*” (*dhammānusārī*) and the “*faith-follower*” (*saddhā’nusārī*) at M 1:479 [**Kiṭṭāgiri Sutta**],³ it seems possible that he has been such a “*follower*” and was thus bound to realize stream-entry latest at death (cf S 3:225 [**Cakkhu Sutta**]⁴ which states that it is impossible for a *Dhamma-follower* or a *faith-follower* to pass away without having realized the fruit of stream-entry).

¹ S 55.24/5:375-377 (SD 3.6) + S 55.25/5:378-380 (SD 77.8). The Chinese Āgama versions are found in SĀ 936 = T2.239 & SĀ2 160 = T2.434.

² S 55.25,5/5:378 (SD 77.8).

³ M 70,18-19/1:479 (SD 11.1).

⁴ S 25.1/3:115 (SD 16.1).

(2003:255 n22; normalized and annotated)

1.3.2 As we have noted [1.3.1], **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1)⁵ is closely connected with the Sarakāṇi Suttas. It confirms the fact that the faith-follower and the truth-follower will not fall into any of the subhuman states. It adds that both these individuals are those who have “(3) gone beyond the plane of the worldlings; (2) descending into the plane of **true individuals**; (1) *descending* into the certainty of **rightness** [the fixed course to rightness].”⁶

This means that **(3)** the faith-follower and the truth-follower have freed themselves from being “measured or counted” in the world—they no more follow the way of the crowd or tribe. **(2)** They are becoming “true individuals” (*sappurisa*), those who are emotionally independent, naturally happy in themselves, independent of others, but inspiring others. **(1)** They are approaching the path of awakening (known as “rightness”) and sure of becoming streamwinners in this life itself.

Note how the language here shows that they have *not yet* reached the path but are streamwinners in the making. In this sense, they are also called “lesser streamwinners” (*cūḷa sotāpanna*) [2.2; 4].

Hence, the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta should be studied together with the Sarakāṇi Suttas.

2 The 6 categories of saints

2.1 The Buddha goes on to list **6 categories of persons who are assured of liberation**,⁷ namely:

- (1) arhats, [§7]
- (2) non-returners, [§8];
- (3) once-returners, [§9];
- (4) streamwinners, [§10];
- (5) **truth-followers** [§11]:
 - (a) who do *not* have quick and sharp wisdom,
 - (b) have *not* attained liberation (not awakened),
 - (c) but *have* the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc’indriya*) of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, and
 - (d) accept the truths proclaimed by the Tathagata “only after pondering over it with **wisdom**” (*dhammā paññāya mattaso nijjhānaṃ khamanti*);
- (6) **faith-followers** [§12]:
 - (a) }
 - (b) } the same as (5), and
 - (c) }
 - (d) has just a bit of **faith** ... a bit of **love** in the Tathagata.

2.2 The elder monks of old (*poraṇaka thera*) call (5) and (6) “**lesser streamwinners**” (*cūḷa, sotāpanna*) or “**maturing streamwinner**” (*bala, sotāpanna*).⁸ Technically, they are those who work to reach the path of awakening, that is, those who will, in due course, attain the “path of streamwinning” (*sotāpatti, nagga*) and then, in due course, to become full-fledged “**fruition streamwinners**.” In short, they are **aspirants** to streamwinning, or colloquially, “streamers.” [4]

⁵ S 25.1/3:115 (SD 16.1).

⁶ **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1,4.2+5.2), SD 16.7. On the translation on this passage, see SD 16.7 (1.6.4).

⁷ For more details, see **(Sekha) Uddesa S** (A 4.85), SD 3.3(2).

⁸ MA 2:120; cf *Vism* 605/29.27. For more details on “lesser streamwinner,” see **Laymen saints**, SD 8.6 (14b).

3 The 5 spiritual faculties

3.1 The 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*)⁹—faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, wisdom—are traditionally said to be “the qualities of a leader” (from *inda*, Skt *indra*, meaning “leader”). However, as spiritual faculties, they are the tools for personal development and spiritual leadership. When these spiritual faculties become “unshakable” by their opposites, they are then known as “spiritual powers” (*bala*).¹⁰

3.2 The Pañca Bala Sutta 2 (A 5.15) shows us how the faculties (*indriya*) are transformed into **powers** (*bala*), that is, these faculties need to be cultivated in ordinary people, even the learners (*sekha*), saints who are not arhats. Only the arhat has mastered these faculties so that they arise *naturally* to them. **The 5 powers** are as follows:

(1) faith,	seen in the 4 qualities of a streamwinner;	<i>sotāpannassa aṅga</i> ¹¹
(2) effort,	seen in the 4 right exertions;	<i>samma-p, padhāna</i> ¹²
(3) mindfulness,	seen in the 4 focuses of mindfulness;	<i>sati'paṭṭhāna</i> ¹³
(4) concentration,	seen in the 4 dhyana;	<i>jhāna</i> ¹⁴
(5) wisdom,	seen in the understanding of the 4 noble truths. ¹⁵	(A 5.15) ¹⁶

3.3 Anyone with *a wise conviction* in the Buddha Dharma can attain liberation. This means that even one who see himself as a “**non-Buddhist**” [§11.1-3], but who has some proper understanding and practice of the Dharma (cultivates the **wisdom faculty**, *paññ'indriya*) [§11.6], or who has “just a bit of faith ... just a bit of love ...” for the Buddha (who is strong in the **faith faculty**, *saddh'indriya*) [§12.6], will have good rebirth (not fall into the subhuman states). Such a person, indeed, may not be a Buddhist *in name* but truly a Buddhist by practice!

⁹ The 5 faculties (*pañc'indriya*): see **Āpaṇa S** (S 48.50/5:225 f), SD 10.4. For a traditional exposition, see eg, Ledi Sayadaw, 1965:338-348.

¹⁰ The 5 powers (*pañca bala*): see **Pañca bala**, SD 10.5. For a traditional exposition, see eg, Ledi Sayadaw, 1965:348-356.

¹¹ The 4 qualities of a streamwinner: (1) unshakable faith in the Buddha, (2) in the Dharma, and (3) in the sangha; and (4) moral virtue dear to the saints. See D 33,1.11(14); S 55.1. The qualities are known by various other names, reflecting their importance: desirable states (*ākaṅkhiya-ṭṭhāna*, S 5:356), the mirror of the Dharma (*dhamm'āḍḍasa*, D 2:93 = S 5:357), the divine steps to the gods (*devānaṃ deva, padāni*, S 55.34-35/5:392), the flood of meritorious and of wholesome actions (*puññābhisanda kusalābhisanda*, S 55.31-32/5:391).

¹² So called on their own. As part of the noble eightfold path (*magga*), the 4 right exertions are called “right effort” (*sammā, vāyāma*), and they are: (1) the effort to avoid (unwholesome states) (*saṃvara, padhāna*); (2) the effort to abandon (unwholesome states) (*pahāna, padhāna*); (3) the effort to cultivate (wholesome states) (*bhavanā, padhāna*); and (4) the effort to maintain (wholesome states) (*anurakkhaṇa, padhāna*) (V 1:22; D 2:120; M 2:96, 3:296; S 1:105, 3:96; A 2:15, 16, 74, 4:13, 125).

¹³ The 4 focuses of mindfulness: (1) contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*); (2) contemplation of feelings (*vedanā'nupassanā*); (3) contemplation of the mind (*cittānupassanā*); (4) contemplation of mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā*). See **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22) or **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10), SD 13.

¹⁴ See **Dhyana**, SD 8.4.

¹⁵ See SD 1.1 (4).

¹⁶ = S 48.8 @ SD 10.4(1.1.3).

4 The lesser streamwinner

4.1 “JUST A BIT OF FAITH, JUST A BIT OF LOVE”

4.1.1 Like the two **Sarakāni Suttas** (S 55.24+25),¹⁷ the **Alagaddūpama Sutta** (M 22) and, indirectly, the **Kiṭṭāgiri Sutta** (M 70)¹⁸ [4.2.3], too, states that with “just a bit of faith ... just a bit of love” in the Buddha (*saddhā, matta ... pema, matta*)¹⁹ [§12.6], we can gain a good rebirth: in this case **M 22** specifically says, a heavenly rebirth.²⁰ The reason for this is clear enough: the Buddha is addressing a monk, that is, one who is supposed to be *morally virtuous and mindful*. [4.2.1]

The **Commentary** to the Alagaddūpama (M 22) Sutta explains that this individual (with “just a bit of faith ... just a bit of love”) are the insight practitioners (*vipassaka, puggala*) who have not attained any supramundane state, not gaining even streamwinning—they are reborn in a **heaven**, adding that the “early elders” (*porāṇaka-t, therā*) call them “**lesser streamwinners**” (*cūḷa, sotāpanna*).²¹ [4.1.2]

4.1.2 If we take this passage from **M 22** and **M 70** [4.1.1], on its own, then, we can read it to mean that anyone who has “**just a bit of faith, just a bit of love**” for the Buddha will certainly be reborn in a heaven-state. However, it can be difficult to justify such a notion based on these suttas alone.²² This, in fact, seems to go against the grain of early Buddhism, when we consider the fact that **the 5 spiritual faculties**—faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom²³—are necessary for the whole process, which implies more than “mere faith.”²⁴

But the Commentary, as we have noted [4.1.1], adds that this individual also meditates: he is an “**insight practitioner**.” Basically, this kind of meditator practises *at least* the perception of impermanence (*anicca, sañña*), that is, the reflection on impermanence [4.4.1.3]. It is this morally virtuous meditator who at least reflects on impermanence that is assured of a heavenly rebirth. [4.2]

4.2 MEANING OF “JUST A BIT OF FAITH, JUST A BIT OF LOVE”

4.2.1 In the **Alagaddūpama Sutta** (M 22,47) [4.1.1], the Buddha is speaking of a morally virtuous meditator with “just a bit of faith, just a bit of love” for the Buddha that is assured of heavenly rebirth. It helps to understand here that “just a bit of faith, just a bit of love” refers to the cultivation of lovingkindness, especially in connection with the Buddha and understanding the meaning of the “buddha” as the 1st of the 3 jewels [4.3.3.2].

¹⁷ S 55.24-25/5:375-380 (SD 3.6). The Chinese Āgama versions are found in SĀ 936 = T2.239 & SĀ2 160 = T2.434.

¹⁸ M 70,21/1:479 (SD 11.1). The phrase *saddhā, matta ... pema, matta* is also found in **Bhaddāli S** (M 65,27/1:444), SD 56.2 but in a different context.

¹⁹ “Those who have just a bit of faith in me and just a bit of love for me” (*yesaṃ mayi saddhā, mattaṃ pema, mattaṃ*) (M 22,47/1:142, 65,27/1:444).

²⁰ M 22,47/1:142 (SD 3.13).

²¹ MA 2:120,18-25. The 2 Sarakāni Ss (S 55.24+25) [§§11.7+12.7], however, on states that such a person will not be reborn in *any subhuman plane*. We may assume that this includes rebirth in heaven, too.

²² See M:ÑB 2001:1212 n274.

²³ See **Pañc’indriya**, SD 10.4; SD 3.6 (3).

²⁴ On the lesser streamwinner and the spiritual faculties, see SD 16.7 (1.6.2).

4.2.2 Morally virtuous and mindful

4.2.2.1 Let us now examine the two S 55.24 passages on **the truth-follower** (*dhammānusārī*) [§11] and **the faith-follower** (*saddhā'nusārī*) [§12] more closely:

Here, Mahānāma, a certain person **does not possess wise faith in the 3 jewels**. He is neither one of joyous wisdom nor of quick wisdom, and he has not attained liberation. However, he has these qualities [the 5 spiritual faculties]²⁵—the faculty of faith, the faculty of effort, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom. [§§11+12]

Note that both these individuals—*the truth-follower* and *the faith-follower*—are not necessarily “Buddhist,” not officially or openly, anyway. And they have *not* attained even streamwinning. However, they have a significant level of the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*): faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom [3]. Now “faith” should be carefully understood here: **the truth-follower** has *faith*, too, but his wisdom is very much stronger. He may not *show* his faith but it is there in him.

4.2.2.2 Now, unlike the morally virtuous and mindful monk (or nun, or layperson) described in **the Alagaddūpama Sutta** (M 22,47) [4.2.1], these 2 individuals— *the truth-follower* and *the faith-follower*—are not necessarily morally virtuous or mindful; **but when they are**, they, too, will attain heavenly rebirth. Due to this uncertainty, or, we can say, latitude, in the Buddha’s teaching, **the Sarakāni Suttas** [§§11.7+12.7] only say that they will *not* “go to” the subhuman states: they will definitely be reborn as humans (with wholesome conditions for Dharma practice). [4.2.3]

4.2.3 The Kīṭā,giri Sutta (M 70) on the 2 individuals

4.2.3.1 The Kīṭā,giri Sutta (M 70) gives us further information about the truth-follower and the faith-follower. Without mentioning that they will not fall into the subhuman planes (which is implied), the Sutta adds that “**he still has to do his task with diligence**.”²⁵ He still needs to build up **the 3 trainings**: keep up moral virtue and cultivate mindfulness, especially by way of reflecting in impermanence.²⁶ [4.1.2]

4.2.3.2 The task that both the truth-follower and the faith-follower have to complete is defined by **the Kīṭā,giri Sutta** (M 20) thus:

- 1 When the venerable one makes use of a suitable dwelling,
 - 2-3 and associates with spiritual friends, and harmonizes his spiritual faculties,
 - 4 he would, by realizing for himself, through direct knowledge here and now
 - 5 attain and dwell in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which sons of family
- rightly go forth from the household life into the homeless life.

(M 70,20.4+21.4/1:479), SD 11.1

(1) “Suitable dwelling” (*anulomika senāsana*) refers to their dwelling in a place where true Dharma teachings can be found and where the 2 individuals are able to study and practise the Dharma effectively.²⁷

²⁵ *Imassa pi kho ahaṃ bhikkhuno appamādena karaṇīyan'ti vadāmi*. See SD 11.1 (5.2.8); also SD 3.6 (4.2.3).

²⁶ M 70,21/1:479 (SD 11.1).

²⁷ On “dwelling in a suitable place” (*paṭirūpa, desa, vāso*), see **Maṅgala S** (Khp 5,8 = Sn 260), SD 101.5.

(2) They associate with “**spiritual friends**” (*kalyāṇa,mitta*), that is, those well-versed in the suttas and mindfulness practice (especially the reflection on impermanence) who are willing and able to personally guide him in the teaching and practice. Ideally, this is an experienced meditation teacher.²⁸

(3) They **harmonize their spiritual faculties** (*indriyāni samannāyamaṇo*), meaning that they constantly practise the reflection or meditation centred on mindfulness with a proper balance between faith and wisdom, and between effort and concentration.²⁹

(4) They “attain and dwell in **that supreme goal of the holy life**” (*tad anuttaraṃ brahma,cariya,pariyosānaṃ*), that is, they are able to attain at least streamwinning in this life itself, even work for full awakening for themselves as arhats (like the Buddha), especially when they are renunciants, whether lay or monastic.³⁰

(5) “**Rightly go forth**” (*samma-d-eva ... pabbajanti*) refers to **true renunciation**. The two individuals who properly follow the sutta instructions for their training will truly renounce the world, in the conventional way as monks and nuns, or they can practise as “lay renunciants” using **meditation** as “mental renunciation.” Either way—monastic or lay—they practise letting go of worldliness by way of overcoming the 3 fetters [4.4.2.3], to attain streamwinning in this life itself.

4.2.3.3 In other words, **the truth-follower**, by examining the Dharma (such as the nature of impermanence) with some wisdom, and **the faith-follower**, with only a bit of faith and love for the Buddha (accepting him as the ideal of self-awakening), will *not* fall into any of the subhuman planes. However, when he keeps the precepts and practices mindfulness (especially reflecting on impermanence), he may even gain heavenly rebirth until he attains at least streamwinning.

4.3 THE 2 INDIVIDUALS

4.3.1 The truth-follower (*dhammānusārī*), literally, “one who follows the Dharma,” is one who “accepts the truths proclaimed by the Tathagata after only some pondering over it with wisdom” [§11]. This is where we have a strong faculty of wisdom and continue to cultivate it in the Dharma, inspired by the Buddha’s example.

Our wisdom increases with a proper sense of moral virtue, cultivating mindfulness (reflecting on impermanence) or deeper meditation, and a growing understanding of true reality by searching the suttas and applying what we learn from them to our life. Upon dying, we **will “not go to”** (*agantā*) any subhuman realm, that is, the animal, the preta or the hellbeing.

4.3.2 The faith-follower (*saddhā’nusārī*), on the other hand, only “has just a bit of faith ... , just a bit of love ...” in the Buddha [§12]. We may not be as “intellectually inclined” as the truth-follower, but we properly keep to the precepts, and when we do unmindfully break a precept, we examine the conditions that brought it about and correct ourself.

We try to study some of the simpler suttas, especially **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1), SD 16.7, and constantly reflect on impermanence. We meditate as best as we can; otherwise, we constantly maintain mindfulness, especially of impermanence. Upon dying, says the Sutta, we **will “not go to”** (*agantā*, “goes not” to) any subhuman realm, that is, the animal, the preta or the hellbeing.

²⁸ See **Spiritual friendship**, SD 34.1 + 8.1.

²⁹ On the 5 faculties, see **Pañc’indriya**, SD 10.4.

³⁰ Lay renunciants are those who live full-time Dharma-based lives studying and teaching the suttas, or as aspirants for renunciation (*anagārika*, etc). They may be celibate, too, or not, dependent on the precepts they undertake.

4.3.3 Who “goes not” to the subhuman states

4.3.3.1 In terms of rebirth, both the truth-follower and the faith-follower—like any of the other saints—will not be reborn in the subhuman states. However, there is a catch here: we need to examine their Sutta definitions. While all the 4 saints—the arhat, the non-returner, the once-returner and the streamwinner—are said to be “**fully freed**” (*parimutta*) from the subhuman states [§§7.6, 8.6. 9.6, 10.6], the truth-follower or the faith-follower is only said to be one who “**goes not**” (*agantā*) to the unhappy states. [4.3.3.2]

4.3.3.2 This difference is very significant. It means that only so long as the truth-follower *uses his wisdom*, or **the faith-follower** “*has a bit of faith ... a bit of love ...*” for the Buddha, they will not be reborn in the subhuman states. The idea here is that they need to have a habit of positive emotions—**lovingkindness** (*mettā*) to be exact—towards the Buddha as the ideal of awakening.

4.3.3.3 This is not difficult to explain: so long as we understand and accept the idea that **the Buddha**, born a human like us, is able to awaken to a transhuman and transdivine liberation, to nirvana, we, too, can attain that state, or at least benefit by not falling below the human state even while alive, what more to say of death. Then, we strengthen our practice by reflecting on impermanence so that we gain stream-winning in this life itself.³¹

4.4 THROUGH WISDOM OR THROUGH FAITH?

4.4.1 Perception of impermanence

4.4.1.1 The Sarakāṇi Sutta 1 (S 55.24) does not say anything more than that by wisdom or by faith, the truth-follower or the faith-follower, respectively, will be *not* reborn in any subhuman state [4.3.3]. There is, however, one more condition to be fulfilled if they are to attain streamwinning, that is, a mindfulness practice known as the perception of impermanence (*anicca,saññā*).

In fact, **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1),³² or any of the 10 suttas of the Okkanta Saṃyutta (S 25) in which it is located, defines both these persons in the same terms. **S 25.1** opens with **a perception of impermanence** on the 6 senses, seeing them as being “impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.”

4.4.1.2 The Sarakāṇi Suttas defines the truth-follower and the faith-follower in relation to this reflection, thus:

... one who accepts these truths after pondering over them with some wisdom thus,³³ is called **a truth-follower**, has gone beyond the plane of the worldlings, has entered the plane of true individuals,³⁴ is descending into the certainty of rightness.³⁵

... one who has faith thus, who firmly believes these truths [is convinced of these truths], is called **a faith-follower**, has gone beyond the plane of the worldlings, has entered the plane of true individuals, is descending into the certainty of rightness. (S 25.1,4+5), SD 16.7³⁶

³¹ See **Entering the stream**, SD 3.3.

³² S 25.1/3:225 @ SD 16.7 (1.5).

³³ *Yassa kho bhikkhave ime dhammā evarā paññāya mattaso nijjhānam khamanti.*

³⁴ “True individuals,” *sappurisa*, also “superior persons”; often syn with “noble disciple,” *ariya,sāvaka*, but here clearly includes those, although not yet on the path, but assured of it, viz the faith-follower and the truth-follower.

³⁵ On this phrase, see **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7 (1.6.4.2).

4.4.1.3 This reflection of impermanence is not a mere ritual but a **cognitive shift** we must make: to see, understand and accept that all we experience are *impermanent*. Understandably, a truth that is as universal as this can easily be accepted either by both the wisdom-inclined or the faith-inclined.

We are more likely to have problems with wisdom or faith concerning a God-idea, than having wisdom or mere faith in the reality of **impermanence**. We can easily argue against the God-idea, but no one, in his right mind, could rightly say that impermanence is neither real nor true! We can rightly deny God but we cannot right deny impermanence!

4.4.2 The faith-follower and the truth-follower as “lesser streamwinners”

4.4.2.1 The (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta then says that these 2 types of persons are of a high moral quality and have “gone beyond the plane of the worldlings, ... are descending into the plane of the true individuals; descending into the certainty of rightness,”³⁷ and that although they have not yet realized the fruit of streamwinning, they will certainly do so before they die:

He is incapable of doing any intentional deed by which he might be reborn in hell, or in the animal world, or in the preta realm.

He is incapable of dying without attaining the fruit of streamwinning. (S 25.1/3:225), SD 16.7

4.4.2.2 We can thus safely assume that both the “faith-follower” (*saddhā’nusārī*) and the “truth-follower” (*dharmānussārī*) are, technically, “**streamwinning aspirants.**” In fact, only with this aspiration and following up with the practice of the reflection on impermanence are we *assured* of both not falling into any subhuman state and of streamwinning itself—as stated in **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** [4.4.2.1]. With this aspiration and practice we become a sort of “undergraduate” streamwinners—who will, in time, become full-fledged streamwinners, that is, attain the “fruition of streamwinning” (*sotāpatti, phala*).

4.4.2.3 This is, in fact, the sutta’s key statement and clearly refers to what, after the Buddha’s time, is referred to as a “**lesser streamwinner**” (*culla, sotāpanna, cullaka, sotāpanna*).³⁸ Having said that, we should understand that merely saying so, even being pronounced so by some famous teacher or franchised by a lineage-master, does *not* make one a “lesser streamwinner,” much less a full-fledged streamwinner. The statement is not the state!³⁹

This term is simply a **reminder** that through self-effort—whether by *wisdom* or by *faith*—we can work for streamwinning. Being a streamwinner or even a lesser streamwinner is a state, not a *statement*, no matter how grand we make it sound. Only by renouncing a good level of narcissism, doubt and superstition—the 3 fetters⁴⁰—will be able to attain this state.

4.5 THE EASE OF ATTAINING STREAMWINNING

³⁶ Both the faith-follower and the truth-follower, in other words, experience joy in the Buddha and his teaching. On how these two experience this joy, see SD 16.7 (2).

³⁷ On this phrase, see **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7 (1.6.4.2).

³⁸ See **Entering the stream**, SD 3.3(6) & **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7 Intro.

³⁹ See SD 10.16 (1.3.2.3); SD 49.5b (4.6.4.2).

⁴⁰ The texts usually list these 3 fetters (*ti, saṃyojana*) [§8.5 n] as self-identity view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*) and attachment to rituals and vows (*sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa*): **Abhabba Tayo, dhamma S** (A 10.76,6) SD 2.4; **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8; SD 3.3 (5).

The ease of entering the path of awakening as a **streamwinner** is broadly hinted at by the Buddha's closing **parable of the great sal trees**:

Even these great **sal trees**, Mahānāma, if they could understand what is *well spoken* and what is *ill spoken*, I would declare them to be **streamwinners**, no longer bound for the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening! [§13]

The operative word here is, of course, "**understand**," that is, even with a basic level of understanding when we are to be able and willing to distinguish good from evil, accepting the former and abandoning the latter, and to direct our mind to the perception of impermanence, we are already taking the first steps on the path of awakening or certainly approaching it.

— — —

Paṭhama Sarakāni Sutta The First Discourse on Sarakāni

S 55.24

[375]

1 Originating at Kapilavatthu.⁴¹

A drunk becomes a streamwinner

2 Now, at that time, **Sarakāni the Sakya** had died, and the Blessed One declared that he was a streamwinner, no longer bound for the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening.

3 Thereupon, a number of Sakyas, gathered together, angry, grumbling and annoyed by this, saying:

"How amazing, sirs! How unbelievable, sirs!"⁴²

Who, now, would not be a streamwinner when the Blessed One has declared Sarakāni the Sakya, after he had died, to be a streamwinner, no longer bound for the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening?

3.2 Sarakāni the Sakya **had failed in his training**:⁴³ he took to intoxicating drinks!"⁴⁴

⁴¹ *Kapilavatthu nidānaṃ*, alt tr "Kapilavatthu was the occasion" (S:W).

⁴² *Acchariyaṃ vata bho, abbhutaṃ vata bho*. Usu (in the positive sense) *acchariyaṃ ... abbhutaṃ* means "wonderful ...marvellous ... !": see **Acchariya.abbhuta S** (M 123,2.2 n) for refs. Here, it is used negatively: *acchariyaṃ vata ... abbhutaṃ vata ...*, meaning, "... how amazing ... how unbelievable ... !"; but elsewhere, in contexts unrelated to the teachings: see **Suppavāsa S** (U 2.8/16,10), SD 76.10; **Udapāna S** (U 7.9/78,30 + 79,2); **Cunda S** (U 8.5/83,-25+31), SD 76.10; **Manussa,maṃsa,paṭikkhepa Kathā** (Mv 6.23.6 @ V 1:218,12).

⁴³ It is possible that Sarakāni had been a monk and then left the order.

⁴⁴ *Sikkhā,dubbalyaṃ āpādi majja,pānaṃ apāyi*. On the 5th precept, see **Sigal'ovāda S** (D 31,7+8) n, SD 4.1; SD 47.3b (2.2.1.2). The Sakyas thought that if Sarakāni had breached the 5th precept (against taking intoxicants), he would lack the 4th quality of a streamwinner. Also note that the Sutta does *not* say that he was ever drunk, but only that he drank. On the 4 qualities of a streamwinner (*sotāpannaṃ aṅgāni*), see (3.2(1)).

Mahānāma questions the Buddha

4 Then, **Mahānāma the Sakya** approached the Blessed One, saluted him and then sat down at one side.

Seated thus at one side, Mahānāma the Sakya said this to the Blessed One,

5 “Here, bhante, Sarakāni the Sakya has died and the Blessed One has declared that he was a **streamwinner**, no longer bound to the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening.

Thereupon, bhante, a number of Sakyas, having gathered together, angry, grumbling and annoyed by this, said:

‘It is amazing indeed, sirs! It is astonishing indeed, sirs! Who now would not be a streamwinner when the Blessed One has declared Sarakāni the Sakya, after he had died, to be a streamwinner, no longer bound to the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening?’

Sarakāni the Sakya had failed in his training: he took to intoxicating drinks!’”

The benefits of refuge-going

6 “Mahānāma, when a layman has gone for refuge over a long time to the Buddha, to the Dharma and to the sangha, how could he go to a lower world?

6.2 Mahānāma, one rightly speaking of *a layman who has for a long time gone for refuge to the Buddha, to the Dharma and to the sangha*

would rightly speak of Sarakāni the Sakya [376] as a layman who has for a long time gone for refuge to the Buddha, to the Dharma and to the sangha.

So how could he go to a lower world?

Those assured of liberation

(1) THE ARHAT

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA⁴⁵

7 Here, Mahānāma, a certain person⁴⁶ has **wise faith in the Buddha**,⁴⁷ thus:

‘So, too, is he the Blessed One [the Lord]: for, he is	<i>īti pi so bhagavā</i>
arhat [worthy],	<i>arahaṃ</i>
fully self-awakened one,	<i>sammā,sambuddho</i>
accomplished in wisdom and conduct,	<i>vijjā,carāṇa,sampanno</i>
well-farer,	<i>sugato</i>
knower of worlds,	<i>loka,vidū</i>
peerless guide of persons to be tamed,	<i>anuttaro purisa,damma,sārathī</i>
teacher of gods and humans,	<i>satthā deva,manussānam</i>
awakened,	<i>buddho</i>
blessed.’	<i>bhagavā ti</i>

⁴⁵ See **Dhajagga S** (S 11.3,11/1:219), SD 15.5. The 9 virtues of the Buddha, commented on at Vism 7.1-67/197-213. For further detailed analysis, see **Buddhānussati**, SD 15.7; see also **Sundarika Bhāra,dvāja S** (Sn 3.4), SD 15.7b.

⁴⁶ “A certain person,” *ekacco puggalo*.

⁴⁷ “Wise faith in the Buddha,” *buddhe avecca-p,pasādena*. “Wise faith” is confidence through understanding. *Pa-sāda* refers to a faith characterized by mental lucidity and serenity, and also a personal radiance. The early texts speak of 2 kinds of faith (*saddhā*): (1) “rootless faith” (*amūlaka,saddhā*), baseless or irrational faith, blind faith (M 2:170); (2) “faith with a good cause” (*ākāravati,saddhā*), faith founded on seeing or understanding (M 1:320,8, 401,-23). “Wise faith” is syn with (2). *Amūlaka* = “not seen, not heard, not suspected” (V 2:243 3:163 & Comy).

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE DHARMA⁴⁸

7.2 One has **wise faith in the Dharma**, thus:

‘Well-taught is the true teaching of the Blessed One,
visible here and now,
immediate [having nothing to do with time],
inviting one to come and see,
accessible,
to be personally known by the wise.’

*svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo
sanditṭhiko
akāliko
ehi,passiko
opanyiko
paccattam veditabbo viññūhī ti*

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE SANGHA⁴⁹

7.3 One has **wise faith in the sangha**, thus:

‘The Blessed One’s community of disciples
keeps to the good way;
the Blessed One’s community of disciples
keeps to the straight way;
the Blessed One’s community of disciples
keeps to the right way;
the Blessed One’s community of disciples
keeps to the proper way.
These are the 4 pairs of persons,
the 8 individuals:
this community of disciples of the Blessed One is
worthy of offerings,
worthy of hospitality,
worthy of gifts,
worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,
a supreme field of merit for the world.’

*supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho
uju,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho
ñāya,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho
sāmīci,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho
yad idam cattāri purisa,yugāni
aṭṭha,purisa,puggalā
esa bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho
āhuneyyo
pāhuneyyo
dakkhiṇeyyo
aṅjali,karaṇīyo
anuttaram puñña-k,khettaṃ lokassā ti*

THE ARHAT (DEFINITION)

7.4 He is one with joyous wisdom,⁵⁰ of quick wisdom,⁵¹ and freed.

7.5 With **the destruction of the mental influxes**,⁵²

⁴⁸ For detailed analysis of terms here, see *Dhammānussati*, SD 15.9.

⁴⁹ See **Dhajagga S** (S 11.3,15/1:220), SD 15.5. For detailed analysis of terms here, see **Aṭṭha,puggala S 1** (A 8.59), SD 15.10a.

⁵⁰ “Of joyous wisdom,” *hāsa,pañña*, alt tr “of laughing wisdom” (from *hasa*, “laughter, mirth, joy”). “Here one with much joy [laughter], mirth, contentment and gladness perfects the virtues: this is joyous wisdom” (Pm 21.17/2:199 f). Comys mention *hāsa,pañña* (joyous wisdom), *javana,pañña* (quick wisdom) [see foll n], *tikkha,pañña* (sharp wisdom, which cuts off all defilements) and *nibbedhika,pañña* (penetrating wisdom, by which one maintains dispassion toward all formations) (DA 3:391-393, 4:84-86; MA 4:84; SA 1:120-123, 2:85 f; AA 2:85; ThaA 3:106 f; NmA 1:231 f; cf PmA 3:640 on *hasa,pañña*).

⁵¹ “Of quick wisdom,” *javana,pañña*. This refers to one who quickly understands that the 5 aggregates are all impermanent, suffering and non-self (Pm 21.18/2:200). See prev n.

⁵² “Mental influxes,” *āsava*, also tr as “cankers, corruptions.” The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints”, RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists **4 influxes**: those of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) views (*ditṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16,2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*oghā*) and “yokes” (*yogā*). The list of **3 influxes** (omitting the influx of views) is prob older and is found more frequently in the Suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The

he attains and dwells here and now [in this life itself]
in the influx-free freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom,⁵³
realizing them for himself with direct knowledge.⁵⁴

7.6 This person, Mahānāma, is **fully freed** from hell, *fully freed from the animal womb, fully freed from the preta realm, fully freed from the woeful state, suffering state, lower world.*⁵⁵

(2) THE NON-RETURNER

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA

8 Here, Mahānāma, a certain person has wise faith in the Buddha, thus:

'So too, is he the Blessed One [the Lord]: for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.'

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE DHARMA

8.2 He has wise faith in the Dharma, thus:

'Well-taught is the true teaching of the Blessed One, visible here and now, immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see, accessible, to be personally known by the wise.'

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE SANGHA

8.3 He has wise faith in the sangha, thus:

'The Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the good way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the straight way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the right way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the proper way.

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals: this community of disciples of the Blessed One is worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, a supreme field of merit for the world.'

THE NON-RETURNER (DEFINITION)

8.4 He is one of joyous wisdom, of quick wisdom, but he has *not* attained liberation.

8.5 However, with **the utter destruction of the 5 lower fetters**,⁵⁶

destruction of these *āsava* is equivalent to arhathood. On this def, see **(Catukka) Samaṇa S** (A 4.239,5.2) n, SD 49.14. See BDict under *āsava*.

⁵³ The one freed of mind has destroyed all the mental hindrances, and as such could attain dhyana at will. The one freed by wisdom "may not have reached the 8 liberations (*vimokkha = jhāna*) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed" (M 70.16/ 1:478): see SD 11.1 (5.2) for details; also **Mahā Suññata S** (M 122), SD 11.4 (3.3).

⁵⁴ *Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ ceto, vimuttiṃ paññā, vimuttiṃ diṭṭh'eva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharati.* This is stock: see **(Catukka) Samaṇa S** (A 4.239,5.2) n, SD 49.14. Cf *abhaññāsi* (or essential arhathood) pericope, with names of arhats: SD 47.1 (3.2.2.3).

⁵⁵ *Ayam pi kho, mahānāma, puggalo parimutto nirayā parimutto tiracchāna, yoniyā parimutto petti, visayā parimutto apāya, duggati, vinipātā.*

⁵⁶ "The 5 lower fetters" (*oram, bhāgiya*). **The 10 fetters** (*saṃyojanā*) are: (1) Personality view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), (3) attachment to rules and rites (*sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa*), (4) sensual lust (*kāma, rāga*), (5) repulsion (*paṭigha*), (6) greed for form existence (*rūpa, rāga*), (7) greed for formless existence (*arūpa, rāga*), (8) conceit (*māna*), (9) restlessness (*uddhacca*), (10) ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61, A 5:13, Vbh 377). The first "**3 fetters**," when broken, lead to streamwinning. In some places, no. 5 (*paṭigha*) is replaced by illwill (*vyāpāda*). The first 5 are the lower fetters (*oram bhāgiya*), and the rest, the higher fetters (*uddhambhāgiya*).

he becomes *one spontaneously born* (in the pure abodes),⁵⁷
due to attain nirvana **without returning from that world.**

8.6 This person, too, Mahānāma, is **fully freed** from hell, *fully freed from* the animal womb, *fully freed from* the preta realm, *fully freed from* the woeful state, suffering state, lower world. [§7.6]

(3) THE ONCE-RETURNER

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA

9 Here, Mahānāma, a certain person has wise faith in the Buddha, thus:

‘So too, is he the Blessed One [the Lord]: for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.’

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE DHARMA

9.2 He has wise faith in the Dharma, thus:

‘Well-taught is the true teaching of the Blessed One, visible here and now, immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see, accessible, to be personally known by the wise.’

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE SANGHA

9.3 He has wise faith in the sangha, thus:

‘The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way; the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the straight way; the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the right way; the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the proper way.

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals: this community of disciples of the Blessed One is worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, a supreme field of merit for the world.’

THE ONCE-RETURNER (DEFINITION)

9.4 He is *neither* one of joyous wisdom *nor* of quick wisdom, and has *not* attained liberation.

9.5 However, with **the utter destruction of the 3 fetters**,⁵⁸
and with **the diminishing of greed, hate and delusion,**

he becomes a **once-returner**

who, after returning to this world only one more time, will make an end to suffering.

9.6 This person, too, Mahānāma, is **fully freed** from hell, *fully freed from* the animal womb, *fully freed from* the preta realm, *fully freed from* the woeful state, suffering state, lower world.⁵⁹ [§7.6]. [377]

(4) THE STREAMWINNER

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA

10 Here, Mahānāma, a certain person has wise faith in the Buddha, thus:

⁵⁷ “Spontaneously born,” *opapātika*, ie, reborn as a deva in the Pure Abodes (*suddh’āvāsa*), the five highest heavens of the form world (*rūpa,loka*) inhabited only by non-returners who assume their last birth to become arhats and attain nirvana. These worlds are Āviha (“Non-declining”), Ātappa (“Unworried”), Sudassā (“Clearly Visible”), Sudassī (“Clear-visioned”) and Akaniṭṭhā (“Highest”) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46).

⁵⁸ “The (first) 3 fetters” (*ti saṃyojana*): see §8.5 n The 5 lower fetters.

⁵⁹ The once-returner and the streamwinner [§10.6]—and the truth-follower [§11.7] and the faith-follower [§12.7]—are not reborn in the subhuman planes, but they are not yet awakened like the non-returner [§8.6] or the arhat [§7.6].

‘So too, is he the Blessed One [the Lord]: for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.’

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE DHARMA

10.2 He has wise faith in the Dharma, thus:

‘Well-taught is the True Teaching of the Blessed One, visible here and now, immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see, accessible, to be personally known by the wise.’

THE RECOLLECTION OF THE SANGHA

10.3 He has wise faith in the sangha, thus:

‘The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way; the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the straight way; the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the right way; the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the proper way.

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals: this Blessed One’s community of disciples is worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, a supreme field of merit for the world.’

THE STREAMWINNER (DEFINITION)

10.4 He is *neither* one of joyous wisdom *nor* of quick wisdom, and has *not* attained liberation.

10.5 However, with **the utter destruction of the 3 fetters**,⁶⁰

he becomes a **streamwinner**,

not bound for a lower world,⁶¹ sure of liberation, destined for awakening.

10.6 This person, too, Mahānāma, is **fully freed** from hell, **fully freed** from the animal womb, **fully freed** from the preta realm, **fully freed from the woeful state, suffering state, lower world**.⁶² [§7.6]

(5) THE TRUTH-FOLLOWER⁶³

11 Here, Mahānāma, a certain person does *not* have wise faith in the Buddha, thus:

‘So too, is he the Blessed One [the Lord]: for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.’

⁶⁰ The (first) 3 fetters: see §8.5 n The 5 lower fetters.

⁶¹ *Avinipāta*, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of *vinipāta*, “the world of ruin/suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggati*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*), esp as *niraya*, *tiracchāna*, *pettivisaya*, *asura-kāyā* (Khpa 189,12 = DA 2:496,11 (on D 2:55,27) = SA 2:97,5 (on S 2:92,16); Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 courses (*pañca, gati*) (D 33,2.1(4)/3:234; A 9.68/4:459) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal birth (*tiracchāna, yoni*), the ghost realm (*petti- or pittī, visaya*), the human world (*manussa*) and the heavenly world (*deva*). Of these, the first three are woeful, with the asura-demons (*asura, kāya*) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are “happy courses” (*sugati*). For a discussion, see A:ÑB 1999:14-19. See **Pañca, gati S** (A 9.68/4:459), SD 2.20. On a late work, **Pañca, gati, dīpana**, ed L Feer (JPTS 1884:152 ff); tr Feer, *Annales du Musée Guimet* 5, 1883:514-528: sv Naraka, kaṇḍa, Tiracchāna~, Peta~, Manussa~, Deva~.

⁶² The streamwinner and the once-returned [§9.6]—and also the truth-follower [§11.7] and the faith-follower [§12.7]—are not reborn in the subhuman planes, but they are not yet awakened like the non-returned [§8.6] or the arhat [§7.6].

⁶³ “**Truth-follower**,” *dharmānusārī*, also “Dharma-follower.” Although not mentioned here, this section describes the truth-follower, while the next section describes the faith-follower (*saddhā’nusārī*). They are defined in **Kiṭṭā, giri S** (M 70,20-21/1:479), SD 11.1. According to **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1/3:225), SD 16.7, these 2 types of persons are said to have reached the plane of the noble ones but have not yet realized the fruit of streamwinning, and will do so before they die. See S:B 1098 nn268-269.

11.2 He does *not* have wise faith in the Dharma, thus:

'Well-taught is the true teaching of the Blessed One, visible here and now, immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see, accessible, to be personally known by the wise.'

11.3 He does *not* have wise faith in the Sangha, thus:

'The Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the good way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the straight way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the right way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the proper way.'

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals: this community of disciples of the Blessed One is worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, a supreme field of merit for the world.'

THE TRUTH-FOLLOWER (DEFINITION)

11.4 He is *neither* one of joyous wisdom *nor* of quick wisdom, and has *not* attained liberation.

11.5 However, he has these qualities [**the 5 spiritual faculties**]⁶⁴

—the faculty of faith, the faculty of effort, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom.

11.6 And he accepts those teachings proclaimed by the Tathāgata **only after some pondering over them with wisdom**.⁶⁵

11.7 This person, too, Mahānāma, **goes not** to hell, *goes not* to the animal womb, *goes not* to hell, *goes not* to the preta realm, *goes not* to the woeful state, suffering state, lower world.⁶⁶ [§7.6]

(6) THE FAITH-FOLLOWER⁶⁷

12 Here, Mahānāma, a certain person does *not* have wise faith in the Buddha, thus:

'So too, is he the Blessed One [the Lord]: for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.'

12.2 He does *not* have wise faith in the Dharma, thus:

'Well-taught is the true teaching of the Blessed One, visible here and now, immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see, accessible, to be personally known by the wise.'

12.3 He does *not* have wise faith in the Sangha, thus:

'The Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the good way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the straight way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the right way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the proper way.'

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals: this community of disciples of the Blessed One is worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, a supreme field of merit for the world.'

⁶⁴ The 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*), see (3).

⁶⁵ *C'assa dhammā paññāya mattaso nijjhānaṃ khamanti*. I render *mattaso* is usu tr as "in moderation," but here as "only ... some." See S:B 1099 n269.

⁶⁶ *Ayam pi kho puggalo agantā nirayaṃ agantā tiracchāna, yoniṃ agantā pitti, visayaṃ agantā apāya, duggati, -vinipātāṃ* [§12.7 + n]. **The truth-follower** and the faith-follower [§12.7]—like the streamwinner [§10.6] and the once-returner [§9.6]—are not reborn in the subhuman planes, but this will be the case only when they habitually show faith and love in the 3 jewels *and*, most importantly, this is their last dying thought.

⁶⁷ "Faith-follower," *saddhā'nusārī*. See §11 n on truth-follower.

THE FAITH-FOLLOWER (DEFINITION)

12.4 He is *neither* one of joyous wisdom *nor* of quick wisdom, and has *not* attained liberation.

12.5 However, he has these qualities [**the 5 spiritual faculties**]

—the faculty of faith, the faculty of effort, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom. [§11.5]

12.6 And he has just a bit of faith in the Tathagata, just a bit of love for him.⁶⁸

12.7 This person, too, Mahānāma, **goes not** to hell, *goes not to the animal womb, goes not to hell, goes not to the preta realm, goes not to the woeful state, suffering state, lower world.*⁶⁹ [§7.6]

The sal trees

13 Even these great sal trees,⁷⁰ Mahānāma, if they could understand what is well spoken and what is ill spoken,

I would declare these great trees to be streamwinners,

no longer bound to the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening!

How much more, then, of Sarakāni the Sakya.

13.2 Mahānāma, Sarakāni the Sakya kept to the training at the time of his death."⁷¹

— evaṃ —

Reading

Ledi Sayadaw

1965 *The Manuals of Buddhism: The expositions of the Buddha-Dhamma*. Tr & ed The English Editorial Board, Union Buddha Sāsana Council, Kaba-Aye, Rangoon, 1965:338-356.

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⁶⁸ “Just a bit of faith ... just a bit of love,” *saddhā, mattaṃ hoti pema, mattaṃ*. The “just a bit of” here emphasizes the quality it qualifies. See Intro (4).

⁶⁹ *Ayam pi kho puggalo agantā nirayaṃ agantā tiracchāna, yonim agantā pitti, visayaṃ agantā apāya, duggati, vinipātaṃ* [§11.7 + n]. **The faith-follower** and the truth-follower [§11.7]—like the streamwinner [§10.6] and the once-returned [§9.6]—are not reborn in the subhuman planes, but this will be the case only when they habitually show faith and love in the 3 jewels *and*, most importantly, this is their last dying thought.

⁷⁰ Comy says that the Buddha was pointing to 4 sal trees nearby (*Shorea robusta*) (AA 3:288). For similar remarks, see **Bhaddiya S** (A 4.193/2:194, they would grow spiritually, if they could think) SD 45.8; **Vāsetṭha S** (A 8.44/4:259, regarding the benefit of keeping the uposatha), SD 89.6.

⁷¹ *Sarakāni mahānāma sakko maraṇa, kāle sikkhaṃ samādiyīti*. See (1).